



The Methodist Church of Southern Africa

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15 September 2026

MCSA Condemns the Violent Killings of Women in Ekurhuleni

The Methodist Church of Southern Africa (MCSA) grieves with the families and communities devastated by reports of the brutal killing of at least eight women in Ekurhuleni. We extend our deepest condolences to all who have lost loved ones, and we hold in prayer those who are grieving, traumatised and living with fear.

Speaking from Mthatha where the Connexional Executive of the MCSA is sitting, the Presiding Bishop, Rev Pumla Nzimande said: “We condemn these killings in the strongest possible terms. Every human being bears the image of God, and every life is sacred. Violence against women and girls is an assault on their God-given dignity and has no place in our homes, streets, communities, churches or society.”

These deaths cannot be treated as isolated tragedies. They point to the wider and persistent crisis of gender-based violence and femicide in our society—a crisis sustained by silence, victim-blaming, harmful notions of power and masculinity, and failures to recognise, prevent and respond to danger. The loss of these women must therefore compel us not only to demand justice, but to confront the conditions that allow such violence to continue.

We call on the authorities to investigate these deaths thoroughly, urgently and impartially, and to ensure that anyone found responsible is brought to justice. As investigations proceed and the facts are established, we appeal to the public to refrain from spreading rumours, making reckless accusations or taking the law into their own hands. Due process must be respected; however, caution must never become an excuse for silence, indifference or inaction when women’s lives are at risk.

Government must strengthen systems of prevention, protection and support so that warning signs are recognised and acted upon before violence escalates and lives are lost. Communities, families and institutions must also refuse to protect or excuse perpetrators because of family ties, social status, professional standing or religious position. Our solidarity must be with those who are vulnerable and those seeking safety, truth and justice.

We appeal particularly to men and boys to examine and challenge attitudes, language and behaviours that demean, control or dehumanise women. Silence in the face of misogyny and abuse is not neutrality. Men must speak up, hold one another accountable and help cultivate relationships and communities grounded in respect, equality, dignity and peace.

As we meet as Conference in Mthatha, the Church too, must examine its own witness. We cannot condemn violence in society while failing to confront abuse, coercion or harmful power dynamics within our own institutions and communities. We therefore renew our commitment to being a safe

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and compassionate Church where survivors are heard, believed, treated with dignity and supported in accessing appropriate pastoral and professional care. We will continue to challenge beliefs, practices and structures that allow abuse to flourish, and we will work alongside all people and institutions committed to justice, protection and healing.

As we start our Annual Conference, we are reminded that mission cannot be separated from the suffering of God's people. The Gospel must be made visible not only in what we proclaim, but in how we defend human dignity, pursue justice, protect the vulnerable and stand alongside those who suffer. A Church that seeks the healing of society must be prepared to confront the violence that wounds it.

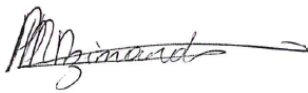
We pray for comfort for the bereaved, healing for survivors, safety for women and children, wisdom and diligence for investigators, and courage for all who work to prevent gender-based violence and femicide.

May the loss of these women not be met with another moment of outrage that soon fades, but with renewed determination and sustained action. May this moment deepen our shared resolve to build communities in which every woman and child is safe, valued, protected and free from fear.

Put away violence and oppression, and do what is just and right. (Ezekiel 45:9)

The Lord is close to the broken-hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit (Psalm 34:18)

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayers.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Pumla Nzimande', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rev Pumla Nzimande
Presiding Bishop